

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NAIROB 10045 071130Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 HA-05 IO-13 EA-10
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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8661
INFO USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 10045

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SHUM, KE
SUBJECT: WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL-KENYAN STUDENT PARTICIPATION
BLOCKED BY GOK

1. GOK'S DECISION REFUSE PASSPORTS TO SOME 20 UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TO ATTEND 11TH WORLD YOUTH FESTIVAL IN HAVANA RAISED IN PARLIAMENT JULY 4 WHEN MP FROM KITUI SOUTH ASKED WHY STUDENTS HAD BEEN REFUSED AUTHORIZATION TO TRAVEL. MP CLAIMED SUCH DECISION DENIED THE KENYAN STUDENTS CHANCE TO MEET AND EXCHANGE IDEAS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE FROM OTHER PARTS OF WORLD AND RHETORICALLY ASKED IF TRAVEL WOULD HAVE BEEN REFUSED IF DESTINATION HAD BEEN U.S. OR OTHER CAPITALIST COUNTRY.

2. ACCORDING LOCAL PRESS, ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS, JUSTUS OLE TIPIS, RESPONDED THAT APPLICATIONS FOR PASSPORTS HAD NOT COME FROM UNIVERSITY BUT FROM INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS AND THAT GOVERNMENT WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH REASONS GIVEN FOR TRAVEL. ASSISTANT MINISTER ADDED THAT KENYA WAS NON-ALIGNED AND PERMITTED ITS YOUTH TO STUDY IN ANY COUNTRY INCLUDING RUSSIA.

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3. GOK'S DECISION TO BLOCK STUDENTS FROM ATTENDING HAVAN YOUTH FESTIVAL HAD BEEN EARLIER PUBLICIZED BY SUNDAY NATION JUNE 25. ACCORDING NATION, NAIROBI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ORGANIZATION(NUSO) LEADERS CLAIMED THAT "LETTER FROM ABOVE" HAD DIRECTED THEY NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO GO, ALTHOUGH NATION QUOTED GOK OFFICIAL AS SAYING STUDENT

APPLICATIONS HAD BEEN REFUSED FOR FAILURE TO PUT UP NECESSARY BOND WHEN APPLYING(KENYA IMMIGRATION LAW REQUIRED INDIVIDUAL APPLICANTS FOR PASSPORTS TO POST 5000 KENYA SILLINGS BOND TO GUARANTEE REPATRIATION EXPENSES, ALHTOUGH THIS IS EASILY WAIVED, PARTICULARLY WHEN TRAVEL IS QUARANTEED).

4. NATION ARTICLE WENT ON TO LAMBASTE YOUTH FESTIVAL AS VEHICLE FOR SOVIET-INSPIRED PROPAGANDA, ADDING THAT FESTIVAL ORGANIZERS WOULD PRE-CENSOR SPEECHES AND INSIST THAT RESOLUTIONS WERE ABSOLUTELY FAITHFUL TO SOVIET LINE.

5. WE LEARNED FROM INDEPENDENT SOURCE THAT STUDENTS HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH SOVIET EMBASSY IN NAIROBI RE TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS AND THAT SOVIETS HAD AGREED TO FACILITATE TRAVEL VIA AEROFLOT.

6. COMMENT: REFUSAL TO PERMIT STUDENTS TO ATTEND HAVANA YOUTH FESTIVAL CONSISTENT WITH GOK SUSPICIONS OF SOVIET SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY WHERE YOUTH CONCERNED. RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY IN THIS CASE WAS HOME AFFAIRS UNDER VICE PRESIDENT MOI WHO FAITHFULLY REPRESENTS PRESIDENT KENYATTA'S VIEWS. GOK KEEPS CLOSE WATCH ON UNIVERSITY AND TO DATE HAS EFFECTIVELY MUZZLED SMALL NUCLEUS OF RADICAL
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STUDENTS. RAISING ISSUE IN PARLIAMENT AND PRESS COVERAGE INDICATES THESE TWO FORA OF EXPRESSION ARE ALIVE AND OPERATING.
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Message Attributes

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